

Los Angeles County – Department of Public Health

Public Health Workforce Competency Framework

Purpose

To establish a common set of competencies for the Department of Public Health (DPH) workforce to support the Department's mission to protect health, prevent disease, and promote health and well-being. The DPH Workforce Competency Framework will serve as a foundation to guide all planning efforts to promote workforce development.

Background

- **Eight Domains:** The DPH Workforce Competency Framework is based on the eight-domain framework developed by the Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice, as follows: 1] Analytics/Assessment, 2] Policy Development/Program Planning, 3] Communication, 4] Cultural Competency, 5] Community Dimensions of Practice, 6] Public Health Sciences, 7] Management, and 8] Leadership and Systems Thinking. The Framework considered the revised Linkages Council framework released in 2008.
- **Customization for LA County DPH:** The original set of competencies proposed by the Council on Linkages was adapted and revised for optimal relevance and application within DPH. Numerous other sources were reviewed for improved language or to identify additional competencies for inclusion within the Framework. This resulted in a highly customized and comprehensive set of competencies applicable to LA County DPH.
- **All DPH Employees:** Recognizing that DPH has 4000 employees serving in various functions and classifications, the Framework addresses the roles and development needs of all employees.
- **Target Practice Levels:** The Framework identifies three target practice levels (TPL): 1] all employees, 2] supervisors, and 3] managers. The base TPL levels serve as a minimum expectation for all DPH employees. Soon, discipline administrative units within the Quality Improvement Division will review and update target practice levels for employee classifications within their respective disciplines, expanding the list of competencies applicable to specific classes of workers. For example, Public Health Investigation (PHI) will add columns to the TPLs for items in their discipline: 1] PHI Trainee, 2] PHI, 3] Supervising PHI, 4] PHI Manager, and 5] Chief PHI and set the TPLs accordingly.

Utility

- The Framework will be utilized to identify training / organizational development needs and to aid in prioritization of work for the Office of Organizational Development and Training and the discipline-specific programs within the Quality Improvement Division (i.e., Nursing Administration, PHI Administration, Health Education Administration, Physician Administration).
- The Framework will provide a mechanism for better coordination between programs in the use of limited training and development resources.
- The Framework will serve as the basis for a self-assessment tool that can be used by individual employees.

How will the Framework help you?

- **For Employees:** The Framework provides a mechanism by which you can identify professional growth opportunities for yourself to support achievement of your professional goals within the Department of Public Health.
- **For Supervisors:** The Framework provides a mechanism by which you can identify professional growth opportunities for employees and facilitate their advancement within DPH.

Los Angeles County
Department of Public Health Workforce Competency Framework
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DEFINITIONS

DOMAIN: A domain is one of the 8 major dimensions of competence for workers in the Los Angeles Department of Public Health (DPH). Each domain has several subdomains. Each subdomain consists of one or more competencies.

COMPETENCY: A competency is a set of complementary skills, knowledge, and attitudes that enable a Los Angeles County Public Health employee to perform work related to the essential services of public health. The level of competency expected of individual employees is determined by their profession, their supervision/management role, and their Unit's responsibilities within the Department of Public Health.

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Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (2009). *Los Angeles County Department of Public Health workforce competency framework*. Los Angeles: Authors.

DPH EMPLOYEE COMPETENCIES

Domain 1- Analytics / Assessment

#	Competencies	Target Practice Level			Source
		All	Supv	Mngr	
1.1	Information and Data Collection				
1.1.1	Identifies data and information sources using evidence-based practices and an interdisciplinary process		X	X	ConPHLink/ANA
1.1.2	Identifies resources and assets in a community		X	X	ConPHLink / LAC DPH
1.1.3	Develops methods and instruments to collect quantitative and qualitative data			X	ConPHLink2
1.1.4	Collects data using best practices to assure quality and completeness	X	X	X	LAC DPH
1.1.5	Evaluates the integrity and comparability of data and identifies gaps in data sources			X	ConPHLink
1.1.6	Uses information technology applications, systems, and strategies to collect, store and retrieve data related to community health			X	ConPHLink / LAC DPH
1.2	Public Health Issue Definition and Analysis				
1.2.1	Applies critical thinking when analyzing data and information	X	X	X	ConPHLink / LAC DPH
1.2.2	Summarizes and interprets information relevant to a public health issue, including risks and benefits to a community		X	X	ConPHLink / LAC DPH
1.2.3	Applies knowledge of the uses and limitations of quantitative and qualitative data to make community-specific inferences			X	ConPHLink / LAC DPH
1.2.4	Understands health trends and deviations from expected health patterns in the population	X	X	X	ANA
1.2.5	Recognizes deviations from normal that might indicate an emergency	X	X	X	EP (EPRP)
1.2.6	Assesses the impact of economic, social, political, psychological, and environmental factors on health			X	LAC DPH (Public Health Obs, 2004)
1.2.7	Prepares an initial statement of a public health issue			X	ConPHLink / LAC DPH
1.2.8	Sets priorities in the context of community resources, needs, and burden of disease			X	ANA / LAC DPH

DPH EMPLOYEE COMPETENCIES

Domain 1- Analytics / Assessment

#	Competencies	Target Practice Level			Source
		All	Supv	Mngr	
1.2.9	Assesses and analyzes unit, departmental and population readiness to respond to emergencies			X	LAC DPH (EPRP)
1.3	Ethical Practice				
1.3.1	Applies ethical principles to the collection, maintenance, interpretation, use and dissemination of data and information	X	X	X	ConPHLink/A NA

DPH EMPLOYEE COMPETENCIES

Domain 2 - Policy Development / Program Planning

#	Competencies	Target Practice Level			Source
		All	Supv	Mngr	
2.1	Policy Development				
2.1.1	Understands methods to advocate for public health programs and resources	X	X	X	ConPHLink / LAC DPH
2.1.2	Identifies policy options, to include feasibility and expected outcomes of each		X	X	ConPHLink / LAC DPH
2.1.3	Articulates the health, fiscal, administrative, legal, social, and political implications of each policy option			X	ConPHLink
2.1.4	Decides on a course of action for successful policy adoption			X	ConPHLink / LAC DPH
2.1.5	Writes policy statements			X	ConPHLink2
2.2	Planning				
2.2.1	Utilizes economic analysis in the process of health planning			X	ConPHLink2 / LAC DPH
2.2.2	Integrates evidence-based interventions with community preferences to improve the health of populations			X	LAC DPH (Kohatsu et al, 2004)
2.2.3	Develops a plan to implement policy			X	ConPHLink2
2.2.4	Contributes to the development, implementation, and evaluation of the Department's Strategic Plan initiatives	X	X	X	Leadership
2.2.5	Applies problem-solving to unusual challenges within own functional responsibilities	X	X	X	EP (EPRP)
2.2.6	Assures that each Program and the Department have written, regularly updated plans for major categories of emergencies that provide for continuity of agency operations			X	EP / LAC DPH (EPRP)
2.2.7	Assures that plans for emergency drills, exercises and departmental response address knowledge and skill gaps previously identified			X	LAC DPH (EPRP)
2.3	Implementation				

DPH EMPLOYEE COMPETENCIES

Domain 2 - Policy Development / Program Planning

#	Competencies	Target Practice Level			Source
		All	Supv	Mngr	
2.3.1	Manages a project	X	X	X	LAC DPH
2.3.2	Manages public health programs consistent with public health laws and regulations			X	ConPHLink2
2.3.3	Identifies and locates the Department's emergency response plans	X	X	X	EP (EPRP)
2.3.4	Assures that the Program and the Department practice all parts of emergency response			X	EP (EPRP)
2.4	Evaluation				
2.4.1	Develops mechanisms to monitor and evaluate programs for their effectiveness and quality		X	X	ConPHLink2
2.4.2	Determines the effectiveness of interventions through data analysis			X	ANA
2.4.3	Evaluates emergency response/drill to identify internal and external improvements		X	X	EP (EPRP)
2.4.4	Applies evaluation results to improve policies, programs and services			X	ANA
2.4.5	Disseminates evaluation results to population and other stakeholders using best practices			X	ANA / LAC DPH
2.5	Ethical Practice				
2.5.1	Applies public health ethical principles when defining expected outcomes, making plans, intervening, and evaluating	X	X	X	ANA and QID
2.5.2	Identifies and balances risks and benefits of policies to maximize the benefit to the community			X	ANA & QID
2.5.3	Ensures that public policies treat stakeholders equitably and justly			X	QID

DPH EMPLOYEE COMPETENCIES

Domain 3 - Communication

#	Competencies	Target Practice Level			Source
		All	Supv	Mngr	
3.1	Written and Verbal Communication				
3.1.1	Communicates with linguistic and cultural proficiency	X	X	X	ConPHLink2
3.1.2	Writes and speaks effectively to individuals and groups	X	X	X	ConPHLink / LAC DPH
3.1.3	Considers one's audience when presenting information	X	X	X	LAC DPH
3.1.4	Describes one's communication roles in emergency response: within the agency, media, general, personal (family, neighbors)	X	X	X	EP (EPRP)
3.1.5	Demonstrates proficiency in the use of communication equipment used for emergency communication	X	X	X	EP (EPRP)
3.1.6	Applies principles of risk and crisis communication			X	LAC DPH
3.2	Information Exchange				
3.2.1	Encourages information sharing between individuals and organizations	X	X	X	LAC DPH
3.2.2	Creates actionable meeting agendas, with evaluation of outcomes and objectives	X	X	X	LAC DPH
3.2.3	Describes the elements of a communication plan		X	X	LAC DPH
3.2.4	Applies communication strategies, including principled negotiation, conflict resolution, and active listening in interactions with individuals and groups		X	X	ConPHLink2
3.2.5	Communicates information through the use of media, advanced technologies, and community networks			X	ConPHLink / LAC DPH
3.2.6	Communicates public health information, roles, capacities, and legal authority to emergency partners			X	EP (EPRP)
3.2.7	Evaluates the effectiveness of communication strategies	X	X	X	LAC DPH
3.3	Ethical Practice				
3.3.1	Ensures the equitable distribution of information	X	X	X	LAC DPH
3.3.2	Considers potential harm to individuals or communities in the use and dissemination of information	X	X	X	PHLS / LAC DPH
3.3.3	Protects client privacy in accordance with HIPAA	X	X	X	LAC DPH

DPH EMPLOYEE COMPETENCIES

Domain 4 - Cultural Competency

#	Competencies	Target Practice Level			Source
		All	Supv	Mngr	
4.1	Personal Competence				
4.1.1	Maintains awareness of one's emotions	X	X	X	LAC DPH
4.1.2	Understands one's general tendencies for responding to different people and situations	X	X	X	LAC DPH
4.1.3	Understands how one's personal perspective affects one's thinking and approach to public health issues	X	X	X	LAC DPH
4.1.4	Manages one's emotions to respond positively and flexibility in different situations	X	X	X	LAC DPH
4.2	Social/Cultural Competence				
4.2.1	Describes the characteristics, preferences, and values of groups within the service population	X	X	X	LAC DPH/ EBBPTC
4.2.2	Develops approaches to problems that take into account cultural differences	X	X	X	ConPHLink / LAC DPH
4.2.3	Provides services in a manner that is compatible with diverse backgrounds, beliefs, preferences, and lifestyles	X	X	X	OMH / LAC DPH
4.2.4	Accounts for cultural and social circumstances of vulnerable populations in emergency preparedness and response	X	X	X	LAC DPH (EPRP)
4.2.5	Addresses the role of cultural, social and behavioral factors in determining the delivery of public health services			X	ConPHLink / LAC DPH
4.2.6	Understands the importance of a diverse public health workforce that is representative of the demographic characteristics of the service area	X	X	X	ConPHLink / OMH
4.2.7	Describes the procedures for obtaining language assistance services in the work setting	X	X	X	OMH / LAC DPH
4.3	Ethical Practice				

DPH EMPLOYEE COMPETENCIES

Domain 4 - Cultural Competency

#	Competencies	Target Practice Level			Source
		All	Supv	Mngr	
4.3.1	Recognizes the impact of one's value system in making decisions in the allocation of public health resources		X	X	LAC DPH
4.3.2	Listens to others in an unbiased manner	X	X	X	ConPHLink
4.3.3	Respects point of view of others	X	X	X	ConPHLink
4.3.4	Promotes the expression of diverse opinions and perspectives	X	X	X	ConPHLink

DPH EMPLOYEE COMPETENCIES

Domain 5 - Community Dimensions of Practice

#	Competencies	Target Practice Level			Source
		All	Supv	Mngr	
5.1	Effective Partnerships				
5.1.1	Understands the essential role of community partnership in improving the public's health	X	X	X	LAC DPH
5.1.2	Describes the differences between cooperation, coordination, collaborations and unified partnerships		X	X	LAC DPH
5.1.3	Describes the roles of public and private organizations within a community			X	ConPHLink/ LAC DPH
5.1.4	Builds relationships with and between internal and external stakeholders to address community issues, including emergency preparedness and response			X	ConPHLink 1&2/ LAC DPH/ EP (EPRP)
5.2	Guiding Community Action				
5.2.1	Describes the elements of at least one community engagement model (e.g. MAPP, PATCH)			X	LAC DPH
5.2.2	Conducts and interprets a community health assessment in partnership with the community			X	ConPHLink/ LAC DPH
5.2.3	Organizes community partnerships to identify, prioritize, and solve health problems			X	LAC DPH
5.2.4	Utilizes team building, negotiation, and conflict resolution skills among community stakeholders for the use of assets and resources			X	LAC DPH
5.2.5	Assures that public health values, perspective, and expertise are shared with community stakeholders			X	LAC DPH
5.3	Ethical Practice				
5.3.1	Assures that communities participate in the decisions that will affect them			X	LAC DPH

DPH EMPLOYEE COMPETENCIES

Domain 6 - Public Health Science

#	Competencies	Target Practice Level			Source
		All	Supv	Mngr	
6.1	Foundation of Public Health				
6.1.1	Identifies the three Core Functions and ten Essential Services of Public Health and ten Operational Standards of a functional local health department	X	X	X	LAC DPH
6.1.2	Describes the difference between the personal health system and the public health system, and the role of government in each	X	X	X	LAC DPH
6.1.3	Describes the key indicators of health and the determinants of health			X	ConPHLink / LAC DPH
6.1.4	Understands the historical development, structure, and interaction of public health and personal health systems			X	ConPHLink
6.2	Scientific Methods				
6.2.1	Understands the difference between the application of scientific methods in public health practice versus research			X*	LAC DPH
6.2.2	Applies methods based on public health science to improve and protect the health of the population			X*	ConPHLink2 / LAC DPH
6.2.3	Utilizes the best available evidence in planning and implementing public health actions		X	X	LAC DPH
6.2.4	Conducts analyses to optimize efficiency of operations and prioritize actions			X	LAC DPH
6.2.5	Contributes to the scientific base of public health			X*	ConPHLink2
6.3	Ethical Practice				
6.3.1	Protects human subjects who participate in research	X	X	X	LAC DPH
6.3.2	Ensures that all relevant information is made available for decision making		X	X	LAC DPH

***Excludes managers whose duties are purely administrative.**

DPH EMPLOYEE COMPETENCIES

Domain 7 - Management

#	Competencies	Target Practice Level			Source
		All	Supv	Mngr	
7.1	Financial Planning				
7.1.1	Describes the county budget cycle			X	ConPHLink / LAC DPH
7.1.2	Develops and presents a business plan			X	LAC DPH
7.1.3	Prepares proposals for funding from external sources			X	ConPHLink
7.1.4	Negotiates and develops contracts for the provision of population-based services			X	ConPHLink / LAC DPH
7.1.5	Develops and implements strategies to manage within budget		X	X	LAC DPH
7.1.6	Applies prioritization criteria to determine which public health activities should be funded			X	LAC DPH
7.2	Program Performance				
7.2.1	Evaluates individual and program performance based on standards		X	X	ConPHLink2 / LAC DPH
7.2.2	Engages in continuous quality improvement		X	X	EBBPTC
7.2.3	Develops systems to ensure that information is provided to those who need it for successful program operations		X	X	LAC DPH
7.2.4	Adheres to customer service standards to ensure that quality service is provided	X	X	X	LAC DPH
7.3	Human Resources				
7.3.1	Applies human relations skills to motivate others and resolve conflicts	X	X	X	ConPHLink
7.3.2	Adheres to county and department policies and procedures	X	X	X	LAC DPH
7.4	Ethics				
7.4.1	Takes action to correct behavior that is illegal or inconsistent with standards of practice	X	X	X	ANA / LAC DPH

DPH EMPLOYEE COMPETENCIES

Domain 8 - Leadership and Systems Thinking

#	Competencies	Target Practice Level			Source
		All	Supv	Mngr	
8.1	Team Building				
8.1.1	Promotes team and organizational learning		X	X	ConPHLink
8.1.2	Implements cross-functional teams to solve key issues		X	X	LAC DPH
8.1.3	Develops a shared vision and key values to guide internal and external action			X	ConPHLink/ LAC DPH
8.2	Growth and Development				
8.2.1	Advocates for opportunities for professional development for self and others	X	X	X	LAC DPH
8.2.2	Values the role of coaching and mentoring	X	X	X	LAC DPH
8.2.3	Encourages participation of all employees in organizational problem solving		X	X	LAC DPH
8.2.4	Maintains knowledge in areas relevant to emergency response	X	X	X	EP (EPRP)
8.3	Managing Change				
8.3.1	Applies organizational and change theory to improve performance			X	ConPHLink / LAC DPH
8.3.2	Uses creativity to solves new and unusual organizational problems	X	X	X	LAC DPH
8.3.3	Understands and influences systems to effect change	X	X	X	ConPHLink
8.3.4	Applies various leadership styles under diverse situations		X	X	LAC DPH
8.4	Systems				
8.4.1	Articulates the vision, mission, goals and values of the Department of Public Health to others	X	X	X	ANA / LAC DPH
8.4.2	Demonstrates knowledge of the organizational structure of the Department of Public Health and the functions of public health programs	X	X	X	LAC DPH
8.4.3	Resolves internal and external issues that may impact delivery of essential public health services	X	X	X	ConPHLink / LAC DPH
8.4.4	Describes the organization's role, chain of command, and management system in emergency response	X	X	X	EP / LACDPH (EPRP)

DPH EMPLOYEE COMPETENCIES

Domain 8 - Leadership and Systems Thinking

#	Competencies	Target Practice Level			Source
		All	Supv	Mngr	
8.4.5	Requests support from others when one's own knowledge, skill, or authority are exceeded	X	X	X	EP / LACDPH (EPRP)
8.5	Ethics				
8.5.1	Develops a work environment and culture that reflect the values of the organization	X	X	X	ConPHLink/ LAC DPH
8.5.2	Assures that employees receive and are trained to use equipment necessary for their work, including their role in emergency response		X	X	LACDPH / EP(EPRP)

DPH EMPLOYEE COMPETENCIES

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